

**NOLAN RYAN'S ALL NATURAL GUARANTEED TENDER BEEF
BRAND NAME SPECIFICATION – AUGUST 2007**

**for certification by the
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Service
Livestock and Seed Program
Washington, D.C. 20250**

SCOPE

This specification is for certification by an Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) agent of products marketed as Nolan Ryan's All Natural Guaranteed Tender Beef (NRGTB). Ground meats (and the raw materials) or further processed meats will not be aged nor labeled as Nolan Ryan's All Natural Guaranteed Tender Beef.

APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

Meat Grading and Certification Branch Instructions
Nolan Ryan Beef Inventory Control Procedure, April 2000
Official Beef Carcass Grade Standards, January 1997
Plant-Specific Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) approved by AMS

PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS

A. GRADE RELATED REQUIREMENTS

These requirements are for certification by an AMS agent of U.S. Choice and Select steer and heifer beef carcasses which: a) show no evidence in the ribeye muscle of internal hemorrhages, b) are free of "dark cutting" characteristics, and c) meet the following requirements:

1. Yield grade of 2.9 or numerically lower;
2. A marbling score of:
 - a. Small 00 or higher for Nolan Ryan's All Natural Guaranteed Tender Choice Beef; and
 - b. Slight 00 to Slight 99 for Nolan Ryan's All Natural Guaranteed Tender Beef;
3. Lean color, texture, firmness, and overall skeletal characteristics must meet the requirements for A maturity in the U.S. grade it qualifies for; and
4. Ribeye Area (REA) of 11.0 to 16.5 in² (inclusive)

Items 1, 2, 3, and 4 shall be determined in accordance with the "Official United States Standards for Grades of Carcass Beef".

B. OTHER SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

1. All eligible carcasses shall be electrically stimulated prior to chilling. Electrical stimulation (ES) shall yield at least a 10 percent initial improvement in tenderness for stimulated versus non-stimulated carcasses (using the *longissimus dorsi*) as determined by Warner Bratzler (WBS) or Slice Shear Force (SSF) evaluations. The ES Program shall continue to demonstrate a statistically significant improvement in shear force and shall be validated at an interval not to exceed 5 years.

2. Eligible carcasses shall be chilled for at least 24 hours prior to evaluation.
3. Carcasses offered for USDA certification shall be evaluated using either the SmartMV BeefCam® (BeefCam) Version 1.6.2 or higher or the QualitySpec® BT Vis/NIR Spectrometer (QualitySpec) Version 1.0 NR. The acceptable score or reading for certification, as determined by the Standards, Analysis and Technology (SAT) Branch, for each technology will be identified in the plant specific SOP. Any changes to the BeefCam or QualitySpec technology will be presented to the USDA for approval and monitoring prior to implementation.
4. Product shall be aged for a minimum of 14 days from harvest prior to shipment to retail.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Carcass Identification Carcasses to be examined for compliance with the requirements of this specification shall be identified and segregated as prescribed in the plant specific Meat Grading and Certification Branch (MGC) Branch Quality Plan procedures. A designated plant or NRGTB employee shall notify the AMS agent of the approximate slaughter time and lot identification of cattle intended for the program prior to their slaughter, and the time that carcasses shall be evaluated with the BeefCam or QualitySpec prior to that evaluation.

Grade Related Requirements Grade related requirements shall be determined by the AMS agent on an individual carcass basis.

Electrical Stimulation The electrical stimulation validation process and any changes which the AMS agent determines to be significant, must be approved by the SAT Branch prior to implementation. The plant shall provide USDA with an SOP documenting the electrical stimulation and validation processes to be used to substantiate the 10 percent improvement and shall include, at a minimum, the following:

1. A designated plant or NRGTB employee shall observe the stimulation of all eligible cattle to assure that all carcasses are electrically stimulated as stipulated; and
2. The AMS agent shall monitor the operation of the electrical stimulation system (e.g., remote video camera and monitor, observation, etc.) per the MGC Branch Plant Quality Plan.

Training Employees NRGTB shall train individuals responsible for program integrity. These individuals will be responsible for training and supervising plant employees who conduct carcass identification, electrical stimulation, ribeye presentation, operation of BeefCam or QualitySpec, product labeling, segregation, storage and distribution, and other duties. A record designating each trained employee has completed the approved training, signed by the trainer and trainee and must be on file at the plant.

BeefCam or QualitySpec: BeefCam or QualitySpec readings shall be taken on each carcass by a trained plant or a designated NRGTB employee.

1. The plant specific SOP shall designate which technology is being used to evaluate the NRGTB carcasses.
2. An AMS agent shall verify that each carcass offered for certification has been measured by either the BeefCam or QualitySpec;
3. Only carcasses specifically identified as having acceptable BeefCam or QualitySpec readings will be eligible for certification;

4. The final acceptable reading of the carcass shall reflect the more desirable reading as determined from either side; and
5. Individual carcasses offered for certification that do not have an acceptable BeefCam or QualitySpec reading will be rejected.

Aging Aging from the time of harvest shall be monitored under a Process Control Program. This aging program includes all boxed beef intended for direct consumption as fresh beef without further processing. (Exceptions: Short plate, short ribs (IMPS 123A), Chuck short ribs (IMPS 130) and Rib, Back Rib (IMPS 124) will be exempt from any aging requirements.) The NRGTB procedure for monitoring inventory control is attached. AMS employees shall audit the inventory control system at least quarterly.

CERTIFICATION

Carcasses to be examined for compliance with the requirements of this specification shall be clearly identified when presented to the AMS agent for certification. Procedures for identification, certification, the removal of preliminary identification marks (or other methods of control) from non-qualifying carcasses, and control of certified carcasses shall be in accordance with established MGC Branch procedures.

The costs of all grading and certification services performed by the AMS agent involving examinations, supervision, official documentation, and related services shall be the responsibility of the person, group, or plant requesting the service. NRGTB representatives must notify the AMS agent of any program changes prior to implementation. Changes, which the AMS agent determines to be significant, must be approved by the SAT Branch prior to implementation.

LABELING

Labeling of Nolan Ryan's All Natural Guaranteed Tender Beef products shall be in compliance with Food Safety and Inspection Service regulations and policy guidelines, MGC Branch instructions and Livestock and Seed Program Policy Standardization Procedure 2 (LS Policy SP2, issued July 25, 2002).